

To: Dennis Grilli  
Chairman; Sister Cities Commission Dennis  
Leslie Stobbe: Staff liaison

From: Massoud Arefi; Commissioner

Re: Report of Fundraising and Promotions Subcommittee

At the January 22 meeting of the SCC , the Commission formed a Subcommittee to conduct a research and gather information about the promotion of the SCC programs through fundraising, by contacting other cities in the Bay Area which are involved in the same promotional programs and fundraising.

Along with Commissioners D. Arbaugh and T. Chang I volunteered to look into some of the cities with similar Sister Cities relationship.

At the February 26 and March 26 meetings I reported my findings about several cities that are involved in SC relationship to the Commission. At the March 26 meeting SCC decided that the Subcommittee, based on its research, studies and interviews prepare a report and present it to the Commission as to how to implement similar methods of fundraising for a more active and successful program.

After reviewing several of the Bay area cities and an online search of other cities in California and other States of the Midwest and the East Coast, I noticed that their fundraising and community involvement for their sister cities are mainly carried out by community volunteers through programs and activities that appeals to a wide range of community members of different age groups and interests. From inviting a clown in a park to classical music concerts and art shows and auctions. These are not new ideas that we have not been aware of. It is only the participation of the communities and ordinary citizens who make the effort and eagerly volunteer their time and effort.

I believe that unless we have an active and collective community and citizen involvement, we can at best keep our status quo and work with the limited budget that we receive from the city. We have a diverse population in Milpitas. My suggestion is to reach the community leaders of each segment of our society, those who there are influential and are respected and looked up to by the citizens of their respective culture, language and heritage. In addition to this, we have to consider that those who volunteer need to be somehow rewarded. Some will do it because they like to be involved and help and serve their communities. Others need to have an incentive as well. Generally people's generosity goes as far as their tax deduction goes no matter if they are companies, businesses and individuals. Therefore, a type of tax exempt entity needs to exist. As to who is willing to that, I think the community leaders with influence need to step forward and people will follow.

Further discussions are needed in the SCC and other ideas are to be presented and considered. I hope that we finally can spark an interest in Milpitas residents for participating in our Sister Cities relationship.